

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, and 5 – 10 are pending. Claims 1 and 4 have been canceled. Claims 5 and 7 have been allowed. The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

On page 4 of the office action, dependent claims 3, 6 and 8 – 10 were objected to, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 3, 6 and 8 have been re-written in independent form to include claim 1, and claims 9 – 10 have been re-written in independent form to include claim 4. It is respectfully submitted that claims 3, 6 and 8 – 10 as rewritten are allowable. In view of the above, the applicant submits that the claims are patentable.

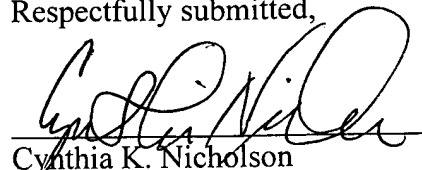
The applicant has rewritten the claims in independent form since the office action indicated that claims 3, 6 and 8 – 10 would be allowable if so re-written. However, the applicant does not concede that other features in the claims are found in the prior art. For all the reasons advanced above, the applicant respectfully submits that the claims as amended are allowable.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,878,368, DeGraaf ("DeGraaf"). The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons. Claims 1 and 4 have been canceled, and claim 2 has been amended to be dependent from allowable claim 5. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is therefore moot.

In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia K. Nicholson', written over a horizontal line.

Cynthia K. Nicholson

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